

NSC BRIEFING

11 April 1968

BACKGROUND ON YUGOSLAVIA

1. Since last fall, when, on the one hand, Yugoslav recognition of the East German regime greatly stimulated western suspicions and when, on the other, Tito voluntarily excluded himself from the Moscow declaration of communist states, Belgrade has been confronted with increasing international isolation.
 - A. In his New Year's address, Tito stated that any summit talks should be expanded to include Yugoslavia and other uncommitted states.
 1. Since then, obtaining a seat at the summit has been a major Yugoslav foreign policy objective.
 2. To this end, Yugoslav propaganda has generally supported Soviet policy on summit talks, emphasizing the role Yugoslavia could play.
 - B. While Yugoslav officials may still attempt to define Belgrade's position as uncommitted, the Yugoslav press, for the present at least, has dropped all pretense of impartiality on East-West questions.
 1. Tito declared on 16 March that Yugoslavs cannot "remain indifferent" to the construction of rocket bases.
 - (a) West German nuclear armament is now major target for Yugoslav attacks. Editorials depict German militarism as again threatening world.

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(b) The UN embassy in Belgrade observes that the Yugoslavs may plan to take the issue of German nuclear armament to the UN.

(c) Italy and Greece also have been subject to Yugoslav attacks concerning rocket bases, but to lesser extent.

C. Tito hopes that his continuing active support for Soviet foreign policy will help to counter Moscow's anticipated irritation over the aggressive presentation of Yugoslav road to socialism at the coming party congress.

II. The published program for the seventh party congress to begin on 22 April shows that the Yugoslavs will reaffirm ideological views which are basically in conflict with the USSR.

A. The program implies strong criticism of the bloc for failing to recognize changes in the contemporary world.

1. It emphatically rejects the ideological superiority accorded to the USSR by other Communist states.

2. It denounces those who regard as "revisionism" every effort toward further development of Marxist thought.

3. And it rejects the view that only Communist parties have a monopoly on forms of progress toward socialism.

III. Despite Belgrade's pleasure over receiving recently a better press in USSR, Tito is concerned over continuing bloc silence regarding the forthcoming party congress.

A. An opportunity to make out the bloc's intentions regarding the congress may have been behind Tito's recent meeting with Kadar.

B. Tito is scheduled to return Gomulka's visit in the "spring" and will have an opportunity to discuss the impact that his congress had on the Communist world.

1. The Sino-Soviet bloc press blackout of the Yugoslav congress and its program suggest that the USSR will publicly comment only as a last resort.

2. The long postponed state visit of Soviet President Voroshilov is scheduled now to occur in May. This possibly indicates that Moscow may be anxious to avoid an open fight on ideological issues.

C. The basic ideological feud with the bloc, although it may be played down, will continue to bar any genuine Yugoslav-USSR rapprochement.

1. Tito still would react sharply should Moscow attempt to pressure him into ideological conformity, but short of this he is not likely to initiate outright polemics with the bloc.
2. While the Yugoslavs may be concerned over the increasing power of Khrushchev, Tito lost no time in congratulating him on his election as premier.

IV. In the Yugoslav national elections on 23-26 March, the regime was re-endorsed by 94 percent of the registered voters, ostensibly increasing the regime's popular support, as this was about five percent more than in last national elections in 1953.

A. A large endorsement was obviously sought by the regime as a justification of its programs.

1. The regime apparently feels genuine concern over local dissatisfaction, and is attempting to correct issues from which it arises.
 2. Dissatisfaction, however, is not of sufficient degree to threaten the regime's stability.
- V. Yugoslavia's last party congress was held in 1952 and the new National Assembly succeeds one which had held office since 1953. The next few weeks will probably see some limited modifications in their respective leadership.
- A. The first meeting of the new National Assembly is scheduled for 17 April.
1. Tito will probably be reelected President, but there is likely to be a top-level shuffle in the powerful Yugoslav Federal Executive Council. It seems certain the topmost leadership will, however, continue to rest with Tito and his two top vice presidents, Kardelj and Rankovic, which makes improbable any change in governmental policy.
- B. While some changes in the upper hierarchy of the party may occur, it appears unlikely that the 65 year old Tito will step down at this time.
1. Persistent rumors last fall had Tito turning over the actual running of the party and government respectively to Rankovic and Kardelj.

11 April 1964

DECLARATION ON YUGOSLAVIA

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